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RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC IMMEDIATE

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SUBJECT: UN/IRAQ: FEBRUARY 23 U.S.-UK-UN TRILATERAL MEETING
ON UNAMI STAFF AND SECURITY

¶1. Begin Summary. During the February 23 UN-U.S.-UK trilateral meeting on UNAMI staff and security, UN Secretariat staff gave an update on UNAMI electoral and

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constitutional assistance. They indicated that Japan had shown interest in providing aviation support for UNAMI, but had not agreed to meet UNAMI's continuing preference for dedicated military aircraft. Secretariat staff reported success in the Iraq-Kuwait border assessment mission; 105 of 106 border posts were assessed, and the UN will formally provide USUN the dates and security requirements for the maintenance mission (sometime in the Fall). U/SYG for Safety and Security Veness returned from Baghdad and will complete his security review by early March; however, he concluded that the UN could not remain in the al-Rasheed Hotel after May 1 when MNF hands over security responsibilities to the Iraqis. End Summary

¶2. EAD Update: EAD Iraq DeskOff Michael Browne said only a small electoral assistance team remains in Baghdad for now, and the focus of their efforts is preparation for an April 5-7 "lessons learned" conference in Cyprus. He said the outgoing international member of the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq (IECI), Craig Jeness, would come to New York to brief the Secretariat. EAD is looking for a successor for Jeness, who does not plan to return to Baghdad, but the position will be revised for a chief technical advisor to the IECI. Jeness' successor will not be an IECI member. Browne said with three electoral events under its belt in the last fourteen months, the IECI does not seem to want a non-Iraqi member, but he assured us that the UN still has concerns about IECI capacity and intra-commission politics and will keep a close eye on IECI administration of future local elections.

¶3. Constitutional Review: Department of Political Affairs (DPA) Iraq deskoff Darko Mocibob said UNAMI is preparing to support the Iraqi constitutional review process and will send some Iraqis to South Africa for a constitutional seminar, but is mindful that some Parliamentary factions want to delay this process or, at least, the discussion of some constitutional issues.

¶4. Dedicated Aircraft: Mocibob said the Japanese government

has said it wants to explore the use of one of its three C-130s in Iraq for UNAMI. Japan says it would not provide a dedicated aircraft, but would consider the use of the aircraft as part of its ongoing MNF activities. This offer does not meet the SYG's request for a dedicated aircraft, but Mocibob was appreciative of the possibility and remained open to how the Japanese offer might be part of a menu of options that would meet UNAMI's needs.

¶5. Kuwait-Iraq Border Mission: Mocibob said the UN Mission had managed to assess 105 of the 106 border posts along the Kuwait-Iraq border. The one post that was not assessed could not be approached from Kuwait, and an assessment would have required cross-border security, which was unavailable. USUN advised the UN to inform us formally when it has determined the dates and security requirements for the border maintenance mission; this mission is expected to be in fall. (Note: The UN will contract out much of the maintenance work, and the commercial contractor should provide for its own security. That factor may well impact the need for MNF-I security. End Note.)

¶6. Veness: Baghdad Facilities: According to Vince Kennedy from the Department of Safety and Security (DSS), U/SYG Veness has returned from his trip to Baghdad and has concluded that the al-Rasheed Hotel will not serve UNAMI needs after the May 1 transfer of security responsibility from the MNF to the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF). Until the UN can move into its permanent facilities at the former U.S. Embassy compound, where renovation could take eighteen months, the UN will need an alternate site. Veness is considering a compound in the International Zone (IZ) currently occupied by Bechtel and proposes co-location of the UN and Bechtel. Kennedy said Veness would present this proposal to the SYG this week. USUN and UKUN will separately seek a read-out of Veness' travel next week. Kennedy

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anticipates that Veness' security review will be complete by early March.

¶7. Canal Hotel: Mocibob confirmed that a nine UNHQ staff are in Baghdad to close former UN offices at the Canal Hotel and anticipated three additional UNMOVIC staff would arrive this week from Cyprus to close UNMOVIC's Canal offices. Equipment will be relocated to the IZ. DSS Representative Vince Kennedy thanked MNF for supporting this relocation, including with additional security after the Samara bombing.
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